

Invitation to Audience (Online Submissions)

Timestamp	Full Name	City	Zip Code	Are you representing yourself?	Remarks	Attachment
02/06/2023 8:42:11	Kurt Svendsen	ARNOLD	21012	Yes	Please see attached 1-page PDF file for introduction, experience, and commitment to work together to co-create a better future for us all.	YES
01/20/2023 19:39:19	Allison Finder	Annapolis	21403	Yes	I am writing to express my strong opposition to construction of a private commercial building at Quiet Waters Park. I moved to this area specifically because of the undisturbed and natural beauty of Quiet Waters Park. This is unacceptable and the community does not want this.	
01/19/2023 20:39:41	Anita	Annapolis	21403	Yes	My husband and I moved to the Hillsmere neighborhood this year. We frequent the Quiet Waters Park. It is lovely, but particularly beautiful where the paved trails stop and a more natural habitat exists. This area encourages native species and wildlife and could be encouraged to do even more in this regard. It seems to us there are already a number of underused picnic pavilions. It is extremely difficult to understand any reason to waste the most scenic areas in order to construct an office park and parking lots, in the name of a conservancy yet! There are numerous vacant commercial areas in the vicinity. Has anyone considered the old fresh fish store? There are even ample parking lots attached to many existing underused structures. We are extremely disheartened by this turnaround from trying to preserve and protect Quiet Waters and a peaceful neighborhood surrounding it to a costly and ultimately commercial venue.	
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Feb 6, 2023 County Council Meeting - Personal Introduction

My name is Kurt Svendsen, I live in Arnold, and it's been a while since I last testified. Many of you know me, some of you do not. A little more than a year ago I took an early retirement to devote myself to citizen advocacy after working 25 years for Anne Arundel County Government, mostly as the Assistant Budget Officer. I provided lots of testimony in those early months of retirement. But I've learned a thing or two since then (you're never too old for that). Acting alone is not as effective or efficient as developing relationships with people and other organizations, listening to different perspectives, and working together to co-create a better future for us all. I've been busy with that lately.

My written testimony tonight is a personal sharing of my background and beliefs as a prelude to what will be many policy & practice focused submissions over the coming months and years.

I was born and raised in Massachusetts; proud to be from the only State whose citizens, in the aftermath of the Nixon reelection and Watergate, had the honor of adorning their cars with the bumper sticker: "Don't Blame Me, I'm from Massachusetts!" While in college, I knocked on doors for the nonprofit called Mass Fair Share. Before coming to work for the Anne Arundel County Budget Office over 25 years ago, I worked for five years in the City Manager's Office in the City of Berkeley, California. (Now that says something about Republican John Hammond's ability to reach across the political aisle!)

I've lived in Anne Arundel County longer than anywhere else in my life, and raised my three children here...***Anne Arundel County is my home.*** I'm proud to worship at a Church whose services have been led by gay and lesbian priests for over three decades. (Yet, I'm appalled that our County Government religiously starts every County Council meeting with a public prayer.)

My wife and I met getting our Masters degrees in Public Administration, but she soon followed her heart to be a middle school teacher. Our two sons graduated from AA County Public Schools, and our adopted daughter will do the same in just a few years. (Go, Broadneck Bruins!) But, we chose a Montessori School option for our last two children's elementary years. My wife home-schooled my oldest son who is on the Autism spectrum for his elementary years, rather than fight the fight for appropriate services. My middle son just graduated from the University of Rochester, commissioned as a Marine Officer, and is currently at Quantico undergoing the rigors of The Basic School.

I share this to emphasize my "liberal credentials" to my colleagues in the Democratic Party yet at the same time to demonstrate my more traditional beliefs. I think it's ironic that much of my testimony before this body (there's been a lot!) has been in opposition to matters supported by the Council majority and our County Executive. I am a Democrat and, prior to the most recent election, I had participated in six County elections. Yet, I voted for a Republican County Executive as many times as I voted for a Democrat. And, as it turns out, I've always voted for the eventual winner! I think this is reflective of the free-thinking nature of Anne Arundel County citizens.

So, that's my introduction. I've got lot's of experience in AA County government finance. And, in the coming months I'm going to publicly tell you all what I think...whether you like it or not!